

Convention and Tourism Advisory Committee
Tuesday, September 5, 2006 – Minutes

Members Present: Ben Vidricksen, Rosie Leek, Bette Timmel

Members Absent: Tricia Weems, Jennifer Sturges, Abner Perney, Gerald Cook, Kathy Tolbert

Guests/Staff Present: Keith Rawlings – Salina Bicentennial Center; Mike Harmon – Best Western Mid America Inn; Sylvia Rice, Jo Ann McClure, Andi Pahl – Chamber Staff

Minutes

The Minutes of the August 2006 meeting were reviewed.

Financial Statement

The July Financial Statement was reviewed.

Division Updates:

Sports Market

In Tiffany's absence Sylvia reported on the following sports events:

- **Kansas Horseshoe Pitching State Tournament** – The Horseshoe Pitching Tournament was successful in that over 100 participants competed.
- **KSHSAA Football** – A KSHSAA State football tournament will be held on Saturday, November 25 at Salina Stadium but at this time the class has not been determined. Volunteers are already being recruited.
- **KSHSAA Baseball/Softball 06/07** – Sylvia announced that we have an agreement signed to host the 5A tournaments here in Salina in May 2007. Kansas City ran into some scheduling problems, which brought the 5A games back to Salina. The 4A tournament will be held in Chanute in 2007.
- **March Madness Basketball** – Tiffany is already working on next March's basketball events.
- Tiffany will be attending the TEAMS conference in Las Vegas October 10-15.

In response to a question posed by Ben Vidricksen regarding usage of the new turf at Salina Stadium, it was discussed that it could be used for non-traditional events during the summer such as band and dance competitions.

Keith Rawlings announced that the 3A and 4A State Volleyball Championships would be held October 27-28 at the Salina Bicentennial Center. He also stated that the Volleyball Championships started being held there in 1980.

Convention Market

Jo Ann gave the following convention market update:

- Jo Ann met with Kansas Crop Improvement in Manhattan August 2 to present a bid. They came to Salina the following Monday for a site visit. This two and a half day conference means a \$30,000 economic impact for Salina. They decided to come here for their February 2007 annual meeting. They had also visited Wichita.
- The Commodities Classic will be here in November. We are hoping to get more business from crop groups.
- The UAV (unmanned aerial vehicles) Future Systems Symposium will be October 5-6. They will be using the bombing range for recon mission training. There are also non-military uses for these vehicles. We have reserved 279 rooms for the participants. This is their first time in Salina and we hope there is growth potential for this symposium and other similar events.
- Jo Ann announced that she would be setting up for the KDOT Winter Expo today and that the Wheatland Cluster Dog Show will be here in two weeks.
- The Red Coach Inn has now franchised with Quality Inn & Suites. Renovations are now being done.
- The Best Western Heart of America has new furniture coming in for 25 of their rooms. Plans are made for both the Heart of America Inn and the Mid America Inn to be completed in 2007.
- The Holiday Inn Hotel and Convention Center is upgrading mattresses. Other hotels are also making improvements.
- Jessica Robison left the Hampton Inn and is now the general manager for the Holiday Inn Express & Suites.
- Jo Ann is looking into doing some convention advertising by way of editorials in trade magazines.

Tourism Market

Sylvia gave the following tourism market update:

- Going on Faith – Sylvia attended the “Going on Faith” marketplace for religious travel planners in Branson, MO August 29-31. This is the second year we have not attended the Group Leaders marketplace and we are testing new markets. There were 85 churches represented and 110-115 representatives. Sylvia met with 30 people, though many did not use Kansas as a destination. There was some interest in events in our area and historic churches also had some interest. We will be doing a follow-up with the contacts made.
- Tour Kansas Coalition – The Tour Kansas Coalition is getting ready for the Kansas East Tour. There are 39 operators on the tour. We will host the Kansas Marketplace on Wednesday, September 20 at the Salina Bicentennial Center. Fifty-five exhibit booths have been reserved so far. The FAM tour is stopping at the Smoky Hill Bison Co. on their way to Salina. Sylvia and Andi will be working a booth at the marketplace.
- National Tour Association – Sylvia will be attending the National Tour Association in November and is doing research to make appointment requests. NTA 1007 will be held in Kansas City, MO. Sylvia stated that it has been since 1988 that the NTA convention was in this area.
- Courier – Sylvia said we did a co-op ad with Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure in *Courier* magazine.
- Kansas Visitors Guide – Sylvia stated that our part of the Kansas Visitors Guide is done. We did a co-op ad page and had about 30 listings. We are continuing to update the web site.
- Kansas State Fair – Salina will be featured in the KDOC booth at the Kansas State Fair on Saturday, August 16. Sylvia and Andi will be working the booth along with Abilene and North Western Kansas representatives.
- Kansas Tourism Conference – Sylvia and Jo Ann will be attending the Kansas Tourism Conference in Dodge City October 8-11. Sylvia said that there are a lot of great speakers lined up including Bill Geist who is one of the keynote speakers. Judy Randall of Randall Travel Marketing did a cultural marketing survey. Cathy Krusick is the state's public relations person; she was also one of the state's first tourism directors.
- Elaine Warner, a freelance writer from Oklahoma, spent August 17-18 in Salina. She and her husband visited Capers Café & Bakery for breakfast, visited Yesteryear Museum, Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure, and the Smoky Hill Vineyards & Winery. They spent the night at Endiron Estate Bed & Breakfast. She had originally planned to just visit Hutchinson but also wanted to see Abilene, Salina, and Lindsborg.
- Sylvia showed a copy of *Midwest Living* that featured Capers Café & Bakery.
- Sylvia continues to meet with the Cultural Roundtable.
- TIAK is selling fundraising tickets for the Kansas Tourism Initiative (strategic plan) project. The prize is a camper trailer.
- The new padded maps are finished. They now have a map of downtown Salina on the back.

Keith Rawlings gave a list of upcoming events planned at the Salina Bicentennial Center that included: Senior Fair, September 19; Barney Live Tour, October 17-18; and a Christmas Concert (not announced). He also announced that the walls in Heritage Hall are now finished. Keith also stated that three full-time food and beverage people are leaving their positions and they have made a tentative selection for a new director.

Keith Rawlings also stated that Jane Gates is the new director for the Stiefel Theatre for the Performing Arts.

Ben Vidricksen said the Scout Museum is still on hold.

Mike Harmon suggested a marquee like the one at the Salina Bicentennial Center be erected in another part of town, such as the Post Office, because the downtown street banners are limited in their reach and appeal.

Next Meeting

The next Convention & Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting will be held October 3 at the Chamber.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming meetings, conventions and events were noted.

The meeting adjourned at 8:31 am.